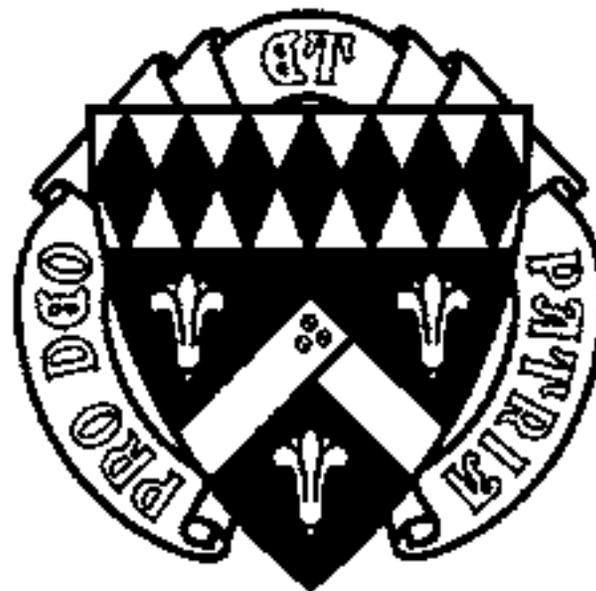


The Sacrament of Marriage: Celebrations, Policies, and Practices

Loras College



LORAS COLLEGE

1450 Alta Vista, Dubuque, IA 52001

Office of Spiritual Life, Loras College
Updated August 2013

Thank You

Thank you for reading through these marriage policies and suggestions. We look forward to meeting with you and assisting you in planning this exciting celebration. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Fr. Robert Gross at (563) 588-7108.

God bless you!



*"Marriage is a great mystery,
but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church."*

—Ephesians 5:32

Contacts

Fr. Robert Gross

Loras College Chaplain
(563) 588-7108
robert.loras.edu

Fr. William Joensen

Dean of Campus Spiritual Life
(563) 588-7463
william.joensen@loras.edu

Craig Swatt

Director of Worship
(563) 588-7303
craig.swatt@loras.edu

Heather Jungblut

*Executive Assistant to:
Dean of Campus Spiritual Life*
(563) 588-7104
heather.jungblut@loras.edu

Jackie Baumhover

Loras College Event Coordinator
(563) 588-7212
jackie.baumhover@loras.edu

Kirsten Lillegard

Natural Family Planning Fertility-care Practitioner
(563) 581-0504
klillegard40@gmail.com

Engaged Encounter

Archdiocese of Dubuque, Pastoral Center
(563) 556-2580

Wedding Music Preparation

Outside the Celebration of Eucharist

Soloist(s) _____ Phone _____

Cantor/song leader _____ Phone _____

Organist/pianist _____ Phone _____

Instrumentalist(s) _____

Prelude Music _____

Gathering Rite

Processional music _____

Gathering Hymn (optional) _____

Liturgy of the Word

Psalm (refrain always sung) _____

Gospel Acclamation (refrain always sung) _____

Congregation's response to vows (optional) _____

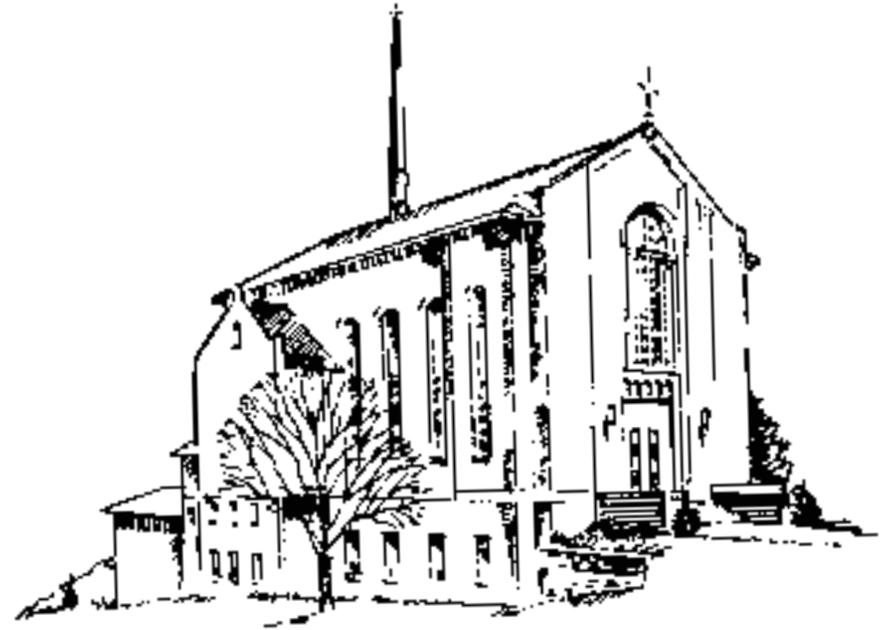
Unity Candle (optional) _____

Concluding Rite

Sending Forth Hymn (optional) _____

Recessional _____

Postlude Music _____



Welcome

Congratulations!

The Loras College community welcomes you! We're excited about your recent engagement and rejoice in the mutual love you have discovered. We're also pleased that you desire to declare and seal it, publicly and permanently, in the Sacrament of Marriage. In this way, your love and life together will serve those around you as a sign that Jesus Christ is alive and present to the world. Preparation for marriage is a tremendous opportunity for spiritual growth together with God, and we're glad to be a part of another milestone in your lives!

Table of Contents

Welcome	1
Table of Contents	2
Marriage Preparation: Essentials	3-7
The Catholic Faith Community	3
An Active Life of Faith	3
Who	4
When	4
Cohabitation/Living Together	5
Preparing to Be One Through Prayer	7
In Summary	7
Marriage Preparation: Spiritual Programs	8
Engaged Encounter	8
Natural Family Planning	8
FOCCUS	8
Special Needs	8
Wedding Liturgy Preparation / Arrangements	10-14
The Ceremony	10
Wedding Music	10
Presider	11
Attendants	11
Servers/Readers/Gift Bearers	12
Reception of Holy Communion	12
Church Environment	12
Photography	13
Church Etiquette	13
Liturgical Expenses	14
Organist-Vocalists-Musicians	14
Parking Suggestions	14
Liturgical Wedding Music Preparations	15-16
Within the Celebration of Eucharist	15
Outside the Celebration of Eucharist	16
Contacts	17
Thank You	18

Liturgical Wedding Music Preparations

Within the Celebration of Eucharist

Soloist(s) _____ Phone _____
 Cantor/song leader _____ Phone _____
 Organist/pianist _____ Phone _____
 Instrumentalist(s) _____
 Prelude Music _____

Gathering Rite

Processional music _____
 Gathering Hymn (optional) _____

Liturgy of the Word

Psalm (refrain always sung) _____
 Gospel Acclamation (refrain always sung) _____
 Congregation's response to vows (optional) _____
 Unity Candle (optional) _____

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of Gifts Hymn (optional) _____
 Holy, Holy _____
 Memorial Acclamation _____
 Amen _____
 Lamb of God _____
 Communion Hymn _____

Concluding Rite

Sending Forth Hymn (optional) _____
 Recessional _____
 Postlude Music _____

Wedding Liturgy Preparation

- The chapel is a non- smoking and non-alcoholic facility.
- No rice, bird seed, confetti or flower petals are permitted.
- We ask that no food or drink other than water be brought into the chapel during rehearsals and the pre-ceremony preparation times. Catholics also need to remember to observe the one-hour communion fast, so it is much better to have a good breakfast in the morning rather than to try to grab something to eat just prior to the ceremony.
- Ushers, or others appointed by the couple, should clean up and return the chapel and dressing room areas to good order **immediately after the wedding**, disposing of boxes, papers, pins and other discarded material.
- Please refrain from using mobile phones or other handheld electronic devices in the main body of the chapel.

Liturgical Expenses

Sharing what we have with others is an important part of Christian life. Generosity to the Church and to the poor at the time of the wedding sets a tone for married life. Some couples specify a percentage of the wedding costs to be contributed to the Church and to the poor; others have made a donation on the day of their wedding to a local charity of their choice.

A stipend is given to the Office of Spiritual Life by the couple at the time of the wedding. Give as you are able and in proportion to the total cost of the wedding. The donation helps to defray expenses associated with the physical structure and staff support of your wedding. Any stipend given to the presider of your wedding is to be distinct from that which is given to the College as an offering. The standard offering to Loras College for a wedding is \$500.

Organist-Vocalists-Musicians

The average minimum stipend for each musician is \$150. Some musicians have a set fee; it is best to ask them beforehand.

Parking Suggestions

As you know, parking on our campus is at a premium. This challenge will be especially true when school is in session and students are on campus. Please let your guests know that they are subject to Loras parking regulations while visiting for your wedding. For weddings in Christ the King Chapel, parking would normally be in the Keane lot. For weddings in Saint Joseph Chapel in Hoffmann Hall, parking is much more difficult. Elderly guests or those with disabilities should be taken to the East door of Hoffmann which is close to the elevator, and then proceed to parking.

Marriage Preparation: Essentials

You have expressed a desire to be married within the Roman Catholic Church. Since there are other alternatives, such as a civil marriage, your decision to be married in the Church is a significant one. Your chosen participation in the Sacrament of Marriage bespeaks an understanding and faith commitment on your part, which sets your wedding plans apart from many others.

As Catholic Christians we believe the Sacrament of Marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman, based upon unconditional love and fidelity, sealed in the presence of the community of believers.

This sacred covenant of marriage is a symbol of the union between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:21-32). In Christ God has made a covenant with us, sealed by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Through our celebration and living the sacrament, God continues to be present and active in our world, making us holy.

The Catholic Faith Community

Sacraments belong not just to the *individual*, but also to the *whole* Church. Indeed, it is the local community, making visible the Church, which celebrates the sacraments. The community of Loras College celebrates the love of God manifested in your loving relationship with each other. We thank you for being that grace of God in our lives.

An Active Life of Faith

Sacraments are celebrated and lived within the context of a committed faith community. *The Sacrament of Marriage is a declaration that these persons are, and intend to be, a part of a parish community*, faithfully celebrating Mass on Sunday; celebrating God's forgiveness regularly in reconciliation; giving evidence of faith in daily living; contributing time, talent and finances to the work of the parish; and respecting the teachings of the Church, especially in sharing faith with any children born to this union. Couples presenting themselves for marriage in the Catholic Church are expected to be registered, practicing members of a parish. If the couple is not currently registered or active at the time they begin their preparation, we ask them to do this as soon as possible. Current Loras students would obviously be able to fulfill this requirement here on campus.

Your life of faith is not limited to the two of you alone, but extends into the future with any possible children. This obligation to be open to the gift of life in children and raising them in the practice of the faith implies that Catholic parents be confirmed in the same faith in which they intend to raise their children. It is

assumed that Catholics preparing for marriage have already received the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you are not confirmed, you might inquire with Loras Campus Ministry regarding our Confirmation program. Again, to request the Sacrament of Marriage while not actively practicing the Catholic faith is contrary to the very nature of the sacrament.

A number of documents and forms are required for a Catholic marriage to be fully processed. It is easy to look upon “paperwork” as a simple legal requirement, rather than a part of the symbolic ritual in which a couple evidences their faith, membership in the church, freedom to marry, and their openness to God’s invitation for children. Documents record what takes place in the ritual ceremony of the marriage celebration. The priest preparing you for marriage will help you obtain/complete the following documents:

1. Letter from Pastor giving permission for wedding to take place at Loras College
2. Baptismal certificate (for each party)
Form 1: The Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire
3. Form 2: The Affidavit Concerning Freedom to Marry (if the presider of your wedding has not been your pastor since you were born)
4. Form 3/4: Permission and Delegation granted by priest (for marriage in non-Catholic church) Petition for Permission or Dispensation (for interfaith marriages)
Engaged Encounter Certificate
5. FOCCUS forms
6. The *Together for Life* selection form for the wedding liturgy (or similar alternative)
7. Civil marriage license—brought to the Office of Spiritual Life the week of the wedding rehearsal

Please note: *Marriage reservations will NOT be confirmed before the couple has personally met with the priest at Loras College and either filled out the paperwork, or received paperwork completed at their home parish. No formal arrangements are made via email or over the phone. Out-of-town couples are encouraged to contact their local/family parishes. It is presumed that couples presenting themselves for marriage are registered and active in a local parish where they reside. If that is not currently the case, they will be asked to register as part of their marriage preparation arrangements with Loras. A letter from the local pastor giving permission for the wedding to take place at Loras College is REQUIRED.*

Contact the Event Coordinator once the date has been finalized to complete the Rental Agreement for the Use of Loras College Property.

Photography

A wedding is a sacred event. Photographing or videotaping the wedding celebration can contribute to the remembering and renewing of this special event and commitment. Since the participation of the couple and the gathered community in the act of worship is primary, the photographing and videotaping are in no way to interfere or detract from the worship experience. Avoid using cameras/camcorders that interfere with a prayerful atmosphere; **flash pictures should never be used during the ceremony. (You may want to make note of this restriction in your wedding program.)** All video recorders should be in a stationary position in the rear or side of the chapel.

A time for taking pictures for your wedding will be scheduled when the wedding date and time are reserved. **An hour (in chapel) is quite sufficient** for a professional photographer to do a fine job of photographing your wedding party. **Pictures should be completed no later than one hour before the start of your wedding. Pictures will ordinarily be scheduled before the wedding.** The superstition of “not seeing the bride before the wedding” is one we do not wish to uphold. The official photographer should contact the presider before the wedding for other details. A sheet of guidelines is provided by the Office of Spiritual Life for this purpose.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to see that members of the wedding party conduct themselves properly during pictures. Weddings are, and should be, joyous occasions. But we ask, when in and around the chapel area, that guests conduct themselves accordingly. The presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel should be respected.

Church Etiquette

The chapel is a place for sacred worship. Please respect this area, noting the following points:

- Maintain reverence for the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel.
- Conversation and decorum should be respectful and appropriate in this sacred place.



Servers/Readers/Gift Bearers

Perhaps you have siblings or other relatives whom you would like to include in your ceremony as servers, readers or gift bearers. Please check with the priest as to age and ability before asking them to be a part of the ceremony.

Reception of Holy Communion

Normally the role of Eucharistic minister is performed by a minister of Loras College; but if you wish to provide your own, you may do so. You will need two or three depending on the size of the assembly. Eucharistic ministers must be commissioned ministers from their parish. It should not be the first time ministers distribute the Eucharist.

Church Environment

When planning the environment (decorations) for your wedding, it is well to keep a few good liturgical principles in mind. Consider first the liturgical season in which your wedding will take place. If it is during Advent or Lent, you can be relatively sure the church appointments will be in shades of purple. Christmas and Easter are naturally more festive times with more flowers and color. Your wedding environment should work with these seasonal appointments. Seasonal decorations in the Chapels are not removed for weddings, so please check to see what the environment might be at the time of your wedding. Chances are you will have to add little, if any, additional appointments, other than your own flowers. Chapel guidelines to keep in mind are as follows:

1. Plan to maintain the simplicity and authenticity of the chapel. A few well-placed plants are preferable to cut flowers. You may want to check and see what the chapel may be using closer to the time of your wedding, as well as any seasonal hangings that may be in use.
2. Floral arrangements are not placed on the altar table itself so as to not obstruct the view of the main elements of bread and wine.
3. Aisle runners are not used at Christ the King Chapel.
4. No tape or any other type of adhesive may be used on the pews in the chapel; the use of bows is discouraged.
5. Other than candles normally used in the sanctuary area, additional candles are discouraged. Due to the ventilating system in our chapel, taper candelabra (even when used with plastic) drip heavily and generally are not used at Loras. However, candelabras with glass votives work well in our setting. Glass cups and votives would be provided by the wedding party.
6. Tables for gifts/cards may be placed in the lobby.
7. Everything brought into the worship space must be removed following the service. The chapel needs to be left as it was before the wedding.

Who

As the Catholic faith community for Loras College, the Office of Spiritual Life at Loras will respect the wedding requests of the following:

- a. current full-time Loras students
- b. Loras graduates

provided they fulfill the marriage preparation requirements, and the Chapel and an approved priest or other minister are available. It is the policy of the Spiritual Life Office at Loras that persons who are not current students or otherwise affiliated with Loras College seek marriage in their home parish or one where they are registered and active.

When

Providing all other requirements are met, all requests will be handled according to the availability of the priests and the calendar of Christ the King Chapel. There are some times, dates and seasons that you should be aware of are:

1. Christ the King Chapel is closed for summer vacation the month of July, and no weddings are ordinarily held during that time.
2. It is the Archdiocese of Dubuque's policy that weddings not take place on Saturdays after 2:00 p.m. Therefore, weddings will ordinarily be celebrated in Christ the King Chapel on Friday evenings, Saturday mornings and Saturday afternoons no later than 2:00 p.m.
3. Loras College does not normally schedule weddings when the College is not in session, nor are they scheduled from the Fourth Sunday of Advent until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In addition, no weddings are scheduled for the weekends of Holy Week; those planning weddings during the Lenten Season are asked to respect the spirit of the season, which is one of simplicity and subdued celebration. Check with the priest regarding liturgical seasons.
4. Wedding rehearsals for Saturday weddings are normally scheduled for the preceding Friday. A rehearsal for a Friday evening wedding may be scheduled on the preceding Thursday evening or Friday noon.

Cohabitation/Living Together

Cohabitation is commonly understood as the situation where a couple has been living together for an extended period of time, and there is recognition by family, friends and those who know them that they share a household. Some in our society have accepted these arrangements as a "sign of the times," due to the uncertainty of relationships, economic factors, and the desire to establish sexual compatibility.

The Church has two main reasons (among others) why couples should not cohabit before marriage. The first is the reality of scandal. Scandal literally means to make

someone stumble. It relates here to couples who live like married couples, act like married couples, and share a common life like married couples without actually being married. Cohabiting couples simulate marriage without sacrificially laying down their lives in an enduring public commitment before God and the larger community. They mislead one another and all those who might otherwise hold dear the special and privileged character of marriage as a source of strength, hope, and salvation. If cohabiting persons lead anyone to God it is remotely and by God's own mercy rather than by clearly revealing God's loving design in Christ.

A second reason why the Church does not endorse cohabitation is the likely occasion of sin. When couples live together before marriage, they are disposed to exchange sexual intimacy and will not sense the call to holiness which centers upon making a gift of one's entire self to another. They do not cultivate the whole range of human intimacy and the graced habits of chastity and other-centeredness rather than selfish concern for one's own needs. The great gift of human sexuality expressed in heterosexual genital relations is to have a unifying power that seals the sacramental marital commitment a couple makes to one another. Cohabiting couples who are sexually active displace and detach their sexual lives from the context in which God's grace and the genuine desire of human hearts—to be loved unconditionally—might be fulfilled.

God's plan for human sexuality is not arbitrary. God's plan recognizes the profound sacredness of our sexuality and is directly opposed to the attitudes and societal norms that mask this great gift of sexuality. Yet even secular studies reveal the wisdom of living in accord with God's law of covenantal fidelity. **Such studies indicate divorce rates in excess of 60% for couples who do cohabit! This figure, coupled with the current divorce rate of nearly 50%, is very sobering and should be cause for reflection and soul-searching.**

By a choice to live together, couples significantly compromise their ability to witness the love of Christ at a time when their love is the center of the Church's attention. In fact, by choosing to live together outside of marriage, they have publicly removed



- Christ's presence in every Sacramental marriage

Sunday worship is the model for your wedding celebration. Catholic weddings are patterned in the way in which our community celebrates Sunday worship. A wedding is not a theatrical event; it is part of Loras College's worship life.

All music needs to be discussed with the director of worship or priest at Loras. Additional information is available on a special form containing guidelines and suggestions for wedding music. Generally speaking, it is better to use instrumental music or congregational singing for the processional and recessional rather than the use of a solo. Consider those who will be present at your wedding. As good hosts, select music that would invite their participation. Refer to the outline at the end of this booklet for ideas as to where and when music is appropriate and desired. Find out what music is well known and sung where you will be married. Every effort should be made to invite everyone who comes to your wedding into active participation in the ceremony, and singing is one of the best ways! Be sensitive to the guests.

If there are people from other faith traditions than Catholic invited, choose music that can include them, e.g., it is better to recite the Lord's Prayer than to sing a tune which only a few guests will know. Everyone should normally sing the Gospel Acclamation, the Holy Holy Holy, the Memorial Acclamation and the Great Amen.

Above all, your musicians must be able to lead the assembly in its sung participation.

Presider

Due to the communal nature of the Sacrament of Marriage, the usual presider for weddings at Loras College is one of the priests from Loras College; however, with permission, exceptions can be made depending upon circumstances. In an ecumenical marriage ceremony, the minister is typically welcome to participate in a special manner in the celebration.

Attendants

Remember that a great wedding does not necessarily mean a big wedding with a large number of attendants. There is great beauty in simplicity and moderation! All of your good friends cannot possibly be included in the wedding party. In planning your ceremony, remember that only two witnesses are required. Members of the wedding party are always seated with the assembly, while the couple is seated in the sanctuary. Liturgical sensibilities would discourage the use of miniature bride/groom and ring/flower bearers, if you choose to use them; **they should be at least five years old.** Discuss with the presider other options of involving friends and family in the ceremony.

Wedding Liturgy Preparation / Arrangements

The Ceremony

The marriage celebration is at the same time personal and a celebration of the entire Church. Together, the couple and the presiding priest carefully plan a prayerful and meaningful liturgical celebration for the wedding. The *Together for Life* booklet does an excellent job of informing you about necessary liturgical options and arrangements of the wedding ceremony. *Please refrain from making most liturgical decisions until you meet with the priest, who can serve as a resource to make your day spiritually memorable.*

The reception of Communion is an action signifying oneness in faith and worship. Reception of Communion by Christians not fully united is not permitted by the Catholic Church. It is common practice for mixed marriages between Catholics and non-Catholic Christians and marriages between Catholics and non-Christians to not celebrate the Eucharist, but to instead celebrate the Wedding Liturgy with Scripture readings, exchange of vows, music and other prayers apart from Mass.

You will receive additional information from the priest facilitating the preparation of your marriage. Among some notable options are

- Scripture Readings
- Sanctuary Arrangements/Environment
- Unity Candle
- Procession Options
- Worship Aid
- Flowers to the Blessed Mother

Wedding Music

The director of worship or priest will be helpful in making decisions about appropriate music for your wedding ceremony. The music you select should be *liturgical*, that is, music that belongs to *Christian worship*. There have been great secular love songs that were beautiful and meaningful to couples but were not necessarily appropriate for use in a God-centered worship service. Secular music is never appropriate before, during or at the end of a marriage celebration in a church. Music chosen should also correspond with the parts of the wedding ceremony and the Scripture readings, since it is the Christian community celebrating in worship. In planning your music, there are certain themes that should be present in the songs you choose:

- God's love for us
- Our love for God and for those people around us

themselves from full communion with the body of the faithful and are no longer able to receive Communion. *Again: because of the seriousness of this decision, those living together outside of marriage should not be receiving Holy Communion.*

Any couple who has made the decision to live together is urged to prayerfully reconsider their decision, searching their hearts in the light of God's revealed truth made known through the Church. They should ponder how God in Christ Jesus is calling them to a deeper and holier form of love. Apart from the permanent commitment of marriage, this love necessarily implies abstinence from sexual relations and stepping away from a life situation which makes this honest self-reflection more difficult to realize

Preparing to Be One Through Prayer

As individuals and as a couple, you need to be spiritually prepared for two to become ONE. The best marriage preparation is a couple who prays together! Disciples of Jesus Christ are people of prayer. We encourage you to grow in your prayer life, not only as individuals, but also together as a couple. Learning to pray together is important in growing in love, forgiveness and fidelity, and in becoming a sacrament and sign of God's love to others. Call upon the Lord and ask Him to guide your heart in the covenant of love.

One of the most important aspects of preparing for your wedding celebration is choosing the Scripture readings. In choosing the scripture readings for your wedding, select ones that articulate your understanding of marriage or what you hope your marriage can become. Those who come to your wedding celebration will come to know your hopes and dreams for your marriage through the Scriptures that you have selected. We also suggest that you begin to reflect upon your marriage vows with each other now, in prayerful preparation for the day on which you pronounce them in public before the church and your witnesses. The more you become familiar with them, the more you will gain insights into the meaning of those vows for your future married life. And so that your hearts might be free of all sin and at peace before God, sometime before the wedding, we encourage the couple to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In Summary

In preparing for a Catholic wedding, you are encouraged to:

- Pray together and alone.
- Be a regular part of a worshipping community.
- Receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation regularly.
- Pray at your wedding rehearsal

Marriage Preparation: Spiritual Programs

Engaged Encounter

It is expected that couples preparing for marriage participate in some formal marriage preparation, usually Engaged Encounter. Engaged Encounter is a weekend retreat experience that emphasizes both couple dialogue and couple spirituality. This balance is presented to the engaged couple through the life experiences of married couples. The engaged couple learns through observation, listening and written dialogue; a powerful form of learning. Information concerning dates, locations, registration cards and further details are available from the priest facilitating your marriage preparation.

Natural Family Planning

All couples preparing for marriage at Loras are required to take classes in the Creighton Model Fertility Care (CrMS) System. As a system of family planning, the CrMS can be used to both achieve and avoid pregnancy. The CrMS provides a system that mutually values, respects, and understands their combined fertility. It promotes shared responsibility, enhances a couple's sexuality and promotes marital bonding, strengthens marriages and families; this approach views children as gifts and encourages involvement of men for support and in decision making. While Loras subsidizes a portion of this training, the personal expense for this NFP instruction is \$200, to be paid directly by the engaged couple to the professionally certified instructor.

FOCCUS

All couples preparing for marriage at Loras take the FOCCUS inventory and are assisted by the priest or other ministers to use the results to better understand themselves as individuals and as a couple. FOCCUS stands for Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study. This instrument is one of the most helpful tools for marriage preparation today.

Special Needs

Some couples have special needs, which may require more paperwork and preparation time than usual. Some of the possibilities include:

1. **Interfaith Couples.** When one of the persons is of a faith tradition other than Catholic, additional formation in the Catholic understanding of marriage is valuable. It is often permissible to include the minister/pastor of another faith tradition, as a participant in the wedding ceremony of an interfaith couple. For the Catholic party, special permission (dispensation) is required.
2. **Non-Christian/Non-Baptized.** When one of the persons is non-Christian or

non-baptized, some additional preparation may be required. Again, special permission (dispensation) is required.

3. **Previous Marriage.** When one partner has been previously married and divorced and has not applied for an annulment, this process should be initiated well before any formal wedding plans can be set. Even if the individual has been married in another faith tradition, an annulment is typically necessary. If one of the individuals has been married before and has not applied for an annulment, it is not possible to set a date for the wedding until the annulment has been finalized. This should be the couple's first concern before attending to their wedding plans.

